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539 sandals.' ≠*Gao/na* came back and got his sandals and ran after the paouw again, but the paouw was gone by this time. ≠*Gao/na* cursed at his wives, 'You stupid lazy women, why were you so lazy that you lay down and didn't stir the pot?' The wives were much annoyed that ≠*Gao/na* had wanted to eat their brother.

Next day ≠*Gao/na* went hunting. While he was away his wives, because they were very annoyed, turned themselves into */qui twa* veldkos [a veldkos which is like small cucumbers]. When ≠*Gao/na* came home he saw the pile of ripe */qui twa* and ate them all. Then he came and sat by the fire. Soon he heard something laughing. He looked around but no one was there. He heard the laughing again and looked around. 'What is that?' he said, but he could see nothing. He heard the laughing again and again. 'Where is that laughing coming from?' he said. It was his wives inside him laughing at him and at this they kicked and kicked until they burst his stomach open and came out and were women again. ≠*Gao/na* was very surprised. How did he eat his wives? he wondered. */Narw*, a dung beetle, then came to sew up ≠*Gao/na*'s stomach. It was very sore. ≠*Gao/na* squirmed and struggled when */narw* pricked him. Then came a little *xwa xwa* fly. He took over the sewing and sewed so gently that it was only like a tickling. ≠*Gao/na* was healed and soothed and he slept.

Next day ≠*Gao/na* went hunting again. He was annoyed with his wives for tricking him into eating them and for laughing in his stomach and bursting him open. Presently he came upon some fruit. He said, 'Oh, if only I had my sister or mother to gather veldkos for me!' He turned back and told his wives where the fruit was and went on the other way. The wives went to gather the fruit, but ≠*Gao/na* with his medicine had made the heavy fruit able to fly from the tree and hit the women so that they ran away crying. [The /Kung who were telling the story made the sounds which the fruits made bombarding the women, slapping
[522] themselves, crying like the wives, and rolling over with laughter.]

The wives returned to their werf. They were quite sad because their husband had treated them in this way and they discussed what they would do to get even with him. Next day they went out for veldkos again. They came to a place which they decided was right for their plan. They dug a big pit. Into it they opened their bowels and the pit was full of faeces. They then went to their werf and waited for ≠*Gao/na*. When he returned they said, 'If only we had a brother, he would go and kill the little eland we saw.'

≠*Gao/na* said, 'My wives, *I* shall go for you.'

They said, 'We know you are lazy, but our brother would go.'

But ≠*Gao/na* said, 'No, my wives, I shall go for you tomorrow.' So they slept. The next day the wives led him to the place where they said they had seen the little eland, where they had made the pit. They said, 'There it is, by that tree. You must go quietly.'

≠*Gao/na* brought an arrow out to shoot the eland, but the wives said, 'You lazy man, do not shoot it; catch it.' So ≠*Gao/na* got out his spear and the wives said, 'You will let all the blood run out. We like the blood to eat. That is what we meant when we said we wished we had our brother here to kill the little eland.'

So ≠*Gao/na* put his spear away. The wives said, 'Right there is where the little eland is; you must jump on it and catch it. We shall go on either side to help you.' And, when they were near, they said, 'Jump and fall on it and catch it.'

≠*Gao/na* got all set and made himself steady. Then he jumped and fell into the pit and the wives ran in every direction, laughing and saying how lazy he was. There he was in the pit. He could not stand up. He slithered around 'like a snake', the people said with graphic gestures and shrieks of laughter. He got up and fell down again, he got up again and fell
● [195] again, swearing at his wives and cursing them. 'These wives are very cruel.' [The people imitated his voice, higher than a man's voice and mumbling.] When ≠*Gao/na* finally got out of the pit he went to a water-hole and washed himself and walked home in the evening thinking of what he would do to his wives to punish them.

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535 796 [756 781] consciousness or deep unconsciousness.[1] They may become stiff or froth at the mouth or lie still as if in coma. Some of them habitually remain in trance only a short time, others for hours. One man used to remain in a semi-trance for most of the day following a dance.

[755] A Bushman curing cannot be fully described in words; it must be heard and I give only an outline here. The medicine man begins by dancing and singing with the others whatever medicine song is being sung. He then leaves the line of dancing men and leans, still singing, over the person he is going to cure. He places one hand on the person's chest, one on his or her back, and flutters his hands. The /Kung believe that in this way he draws the sickness, real or potential, out of the person through his own arms into himself. He grunts with shuddering, gurgling, gasping grunts which intensify in tempo and pitch into shrieks and reach a high, piercing, quavering yell. Finally the medicine man throws up his arms to cast the sickness out, hurling it into the darkness back to *//Gauwa* or the *//gauwasi*, with a sharp yelping cry of '*Kai Kai Kai*'. This shows that it is heavy work to draw the sickness out. The effect of the sound on one observer, myself, was striking—gooseflesh and a stopping of the breath which made it seem as though the heart stood still an instant. A medicine man goes to every person present, leaning over each to cure, even the babies, who, amazingly, [852] seldom cry, though he gurgles and gasps right into their ears. If someone is actually sick, he returns to him again and again through the night.

After the curing has been going on for some time, medicine men begin to reach their state of frenzy. They no longer go around to the people, their spasms of grunting and shrieking become more frequent and violent, their stomachs heave, they stagger and sway. They rush to the fire, trample it, pick up the coals, set fire to their hair. Fire activates the medicine in them. People hold them to keep them from falling and beat out the flames. They rush out into the darkness, where *//Gauwa* and the *//gauwasi* are lurking. They hurl burning sticks and swear at them. 'Filthy face! Take away the sickness you have brought.' 'Uncovered penis[2]! You are bad. You want to kill us. Go away.' '*Hishe*, you are a liar. This man will not die.' At this point they may fall into deep unconsciousness or sink down semi-conscious, eyes closed, unable to walk.

The medicine men who have not reached their full frenzy or who have passed through it attend those who are in it. The /Kung believe that at such a time the medicine man's spirit leaves his body and goes out to meet *//Gauwa* and the *//gauwasi*. They call this 'half death'. It is a dangerous time and the man's body must be watched over and kept warm. The medicine men lean over the one who is in trance. They

[276] [1] The /Kung know about the drug called dagga. They told us that it grows in B.P. and that when they go to trade they sometimes get a little. They like to have some when they go hunting; it keeps one from feeling tired or discouraged, they say. They might take some at a dance if they had it, but they are not dependent on it or on any other substance to induce trance. The trances are psychologically induced.

● [195 578] [2] /Kung men swear a great deal. The swearing plays always upon the themes of the genital organs, sexual intercourse, incest, and excrement. In deprecation they call each other genital organs or tell each other to go and commit incest with their mothers, sisters, wives' mothers, or sons' wives. We have not recorded their saying 'daughter'. Is that thought so terrible to them that its expression is beyond even these hardened swearers? They use the same themes in their blasphemy against the gods. 'Uncovered' or 'thrown-away penis' may mean 'circumcised'. This is a great insult among the /Kung who do not circumcise but know that the Bantu do. 'Filthy face' means 'covered with excrement'.